



# **Land Snail Survey of the Lower Salmon River Drainage, Idaho**

*by Terrence J. Frest and Edward J. Johannes*

# **LAND SNAIL SURVEY OF THE LOWER SALMON RIVER DRAINAGE, IDAHO**

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The universe is a more amazing puzzle than ever, as you glance along this bewildering series of animated forms---the hazy butterflies, the carved shells, the birds, beasts, fishes, insects, snakes, and the upheaving principle of life everywhere incipient, in the very rock aping organized forms. Not a form so grotesque, so savage, nor so beautiful but is an expression of some property inherent in man the observer---an occult relation between the very scorpions and man. I feel the centipede in me---cayman, carp, eagle, and fox. I am moved by strange sympathies; I say continually "I will be a naturalist."

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1833

This wide ranging and plastic genus [*Oreohelix*] ....shows two centers of speciation. The most dramatic one is in the Salmon River Valley between Riggins and White Bird. Ten taxa of specific and subspecific rank are known from this restricted area, while the next greatest center, the entire northern part of Utah, has eleven races of five species distributed over a much wider area. This section of the Salmon River Valley is one of the best collected areas for land snails in western North America.....This aggregation of taxa presents perhaps the most striking assemblage of monogeneric land snail local diversity in North America.

-- Alan Solem, 1974

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